

# Minnesota Plant Press

The Minnesota Native Plant Society Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 4

**Summer 2004** 

## **Monthly meetings**

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, 3815 East 80th St. Bloomington, MN 55425-1600 952-854-5900

6:30 p.m. — Building east door opens

6:30 p.m. — Refreshments,

information, Room A

7 – 9 p.m — Program, society business 7:30 p.m. — Building door is locked

9:30 p.m. — Building closes

### **Programs**

The MNPS meets the first Thursday in October, November, December, February, March, April, May, and June. Check the Web site for more program information.

Oct. 7: "Use of Native Plants in Stream Bank Stabilization," by Greg Thompson, Anoka County Conservation District. Plant-of-the-Month: To be announced.

Nov. 4: "Biological Control of Invasive Plants in Minnesota," by Luke Sinner, DNR Coordinator for Purple Loosestrife Program. Seed exchange.

**Dec. 2**: To be announced.

### Membership form is inside

The MNPS membership year is from Oct.1 to Sept. 30. To join, or to renew your membership and ensure you continue receiving this newletter, clip or copy the form on page 7, complete it, and mail it, with your check to the address shown.

#### **MNPS** Web site

http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/biology/mnps e-mail: MNPS@HotPOP.com

### **MNPS** Listserve

Send a message that includes the word "subscribe" or "unsubscribe" and your name in the body of the message to: mn-natpl-request@stolaf.edu

# MNPS Adopts Grey Cloud Dunes SNA

by Karen Schik

According to the Minnesota Native Plant Society bylaws, the purpose of the organization includes "Preservation of special plants, plant communities, and scientific and natural areas." It is in keeping with this mission, therefore, that the board of directors has decided to become actively involved with management and preservation of Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs), which are owned and managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The board chose to focus on Grey Cloud Dunes SNA in Cottage Grove and is hopeful that many members will choose to participate in future management activities that will be scheduled there. We hope to demonstrate our commitment as an organization to the preservation of these areas.

Grey Cloud Dunes SNA is rare gem of natural areas in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The primary habitat of the 220-acre piece is sand barrens dry prairie. The prairie occupies two river terraces, about 40 feet and 110 feet above the river, which were created nearly 10,000 years ago by sandy deposits of the Glacial River Warren. Dry prairies are much less common in Minnesota than mesic, tallgrass prairies, which are familiar to most people. Dry prairies have a unique assemblage of plant and animal species associated with them. Grey Cloud Dunes, the largest remnant dry prairie in the Twin Cities, is an excellent example of this plant community type and harbors five rare plant species (seabeach needle grass, Illinois tick trefoil, long-bearded hawkweed, Louisiana broomrape, and Hill's thistle). Donated to the DNR by Ashland Oil Company in the late 1990s, this site is a wonderful asset to the people of the state.

As with all natural areas, Grey Cloud Dunes needs active management to retain its character and composition. The MNPS Board of Directors became interested in working with the SNA program not only because it is in keeping with the mission of the organization, but also because the SNAs are in dire need of help at this time. State budget cuts have seriously impaired the ability of the SNA program to keep up with all the management needed at its properties. SNAs are showcases of the presettlement condition of native plant communities and are vital to the preservation of our natural resources. Unlike state parks, which are highly developed with trails, buildings and other

Continued on page 6

# New officers, board members assume duties

A new vice president was elected, and new board members were welcomed at the June 24 meeting of the MNPS Board of Directors.

Jason Husveth was re-elected MNPS president, and Scott Milburn was elected vice president. Linda Huhn did not wish to continue as vice president, but she will continue as program chair. Karen Schik, who has been sharing secretarial duties with Joel Dunnette, now has full responsibilities for that position. David Johnson was re-elected treasurer and also elected to the board. He will serve the final year of the term of Janet Larson, who resigned.

New board members, who were elected at the March general membership meeting, are Ron Huber and Ken Arndt. Jason Husveth was re-elected to the board. Their terms will expire in 2007. Terms of continuing board members Dianne Plunkett Latham, Shirley Mah Kooyman and Scott Milburn expire in 2006. Terms of Karen Schik, Doug Mensing and David Johnson expire in 2005. Chuck and Ellen Peck have volunteered to mail the information packets to new members. They already mail the newsletters.

Other actions by the board included making Illinois Botanist Robert H. Mohlenbrock and his wife honorary members, deciding to form a liaison with the DNR to assist with the Grey Cloud Dunes SNA, and agreeing to assist in staffing the Minnesota Horticultural Society's educational exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair. That exhibit will feature native plants.

### Web site links compiled

Hundreds of links to Web sites about invasives and other environmental topics are now linked on the Invasive Plants of Wisconsin Web site at: http://ipaw.org/klinks.asp The 553 links, compiled by Kelly Kearns, are filterable by major category at this time. Marsha Vomastic, IPWA webmaker, plans to enhance the search capabilities and refine the categorization in the future.

## Minnesota Native Plant Society's purpose

(Abbreviated from the bylaws)

This organization is exclusively organized and operated for educational and scientific purposes, including the following:

- 1. Conservation of all native plants.
- 2. Continuing education of all members in the plant sciences.
- 3. Education of the public regarding environmental protection of plant life
- 4. Encouragement of research and publications on plants native to Minnesota.
- 5. Study of legislation on Minnesota flora, vegetation and ecosystems.
- 6. Preservation of special plants, plant communities and scientific and natural areas.
- 7. Cooperation in programs concerned with the ecology of natural resources and scenic features.
- 8. Fellowship with all persons interested in native plants through meetings, lectures, workshops and field trips.

# MNPS Board of Directors

President: Jason Husveth, Critical Connections Ecological Services Inc., 14758 Ostlund Trail N., Marine on St. Croix, MN; 651-247-0474; cciecology@att.net

Vice-President: Scott Milburn,72 St. Albans St. N., St. Paul, MN 55419; 612-310-6260; smilburn@ccesinc.com

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# Three groups win 'Think Native' grants of money, plants or seeds

by Dianne Plunkett Latham, Chair, Think Native Committee

The MNPS Think Native grant program was revised in 2004. Instead of making grants to individuals, the grants are now given to organizations for planting native plant gardens in public places.

We were pleased to receive 11 applications for our Think Native grant this year. All were outstanding, and we wished that we had enough funding to award a \$200 grant to each. Unfortunately, we had but one monetary grant to give. So many applicants were outstanding, however, that we endeavored to find other ways to help them fill their native plant gardens.

In addition to awarding one \$200 grant, we made a second grant of the native plants remaining from the June 3, 2004 plant sale. We made a third grant of the seeds remaining after the November seed exchange. The grant selection committee, which met on May 6, consisted of Dianne Plunkett Latham, Dave Crawford, Shirley Mah Kooyman and Karen Schik, with Linda Huhn participating via e-mail. It is with great pleasure that we announce the following winners:

### **Wright County Humane Society**

Eva Forcier applied on behalf of the Wright County Humane Society for a memorial garden at the Humane Society, 4375 Hwy. 55 S.E., Buffalo, and was awarded the \$200 grant.

#### **Bassett's Creek**

Greg Lecker applied on behalf of the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association and the Bryn Mawr Garden Club for the restoration project at Bassett's Creek on Glenwood Ave. between Vincent and Thomas Avenues N. in Minneapolis. Buckthorn has been removed, and plantings of native plants have begun. They were awarded a grant of plants from the June 3 MNPS plant sale. Greg Lecker, Karen Soderberg and Stephanie Brody picked up a dozen or more flats of native plants after the sale and had them all planted by the end of the following weekend!

### **Century College**

Ginny Coyle applied on behalf of the Century College (White Bear Lake) horticulture program, which will develop native plantings on their campus. Century College offers a two-year degree program in horticulture. They have collected seed from "Jim's Prairie" in Maplewood and plan to coordinate their project with Joy Cedarleaf, biology instructor in Field Biology and Restoration Ecology.

Century College has propagation greenhouses where they can grow seeds for their use and to share with other organizations. They would appreciate a MNPS speaker for their horticulture class on the use of native plants in landscaping. Anyone interested should contact Ginny Coyle at 651-773-1726, ext. 2, or G.Coyle@Century.mnscu.edu.

Ginny Coyle responded: "Thank you for the gift of the seeds. We will put them to good use. A visit to the wildlife refuge and possibly attending the (November) meeting would be a great field trip for the

class, which is Biology of Horticultural Crops." This group was awarded the grant of seeds from the Nov. 4, 2004 seed exchange.

# Outdoor plant sale is successful

by Gerry Drewry

This year's plant sale, which was held outdoors, was a success logistically, socially and financially.

The donated plants were arranged on the low walls outside of the Minnesota National Wildlife Refuge entrance. We had an excellent variety of plants. There were some outstanding specimens for the silent auction, including two Goldie's ferns donated by Tom Bittinger.

There was much more room for members to inspect the plants and to visit with each other than at the previous sales inside the building. In addition, there were no tables to move, and clean-up was simple.

The sale enriched the MNPS treasury by \$879 — the second highest total since we started the sales.

Proceeds for the last six sales were: 1999, \$593.35; 2000, \$424.00; 2001, \$360.50; 2002, \$454.75; 2003, \$911.00; 2004, \$879.

The weather was perfect, so we didn't need the tent that Ken Arndt brought for Cashiers David and Susan Johnson to use in case of rain. Plant Sale Chairs Dave Crawford and Gerry Drewry thank the many volunteers who helped before, during and after the sale. They plan to repeat the outdoor format next year.

# Organizations' plant sales must follow new state rules

by Dianne Plunkett Latham

On July 1, 2003, amendments to Nursery Hobbyist Sales (Minn. Statutes 18H.06) and to the Conservation of Wildflowers (Minn. Statutes 18H.18) Acts that were passed by the Minnesota Legislature took effect. These amendments affect plant sales by garden clubs and organizations such as the Minnesota Native Plant Society.

Wildflowers sold at MNPS plant sales are covered under the statute for nursery hobbyist sales (see Minn. Statute 18H.06, Subd. 2) because wildflowers fall under the Nursery Stock definition (see Minn. Statutes 18H.02, Subd. 20) of "trees, shrubs, vines, perennials, biennials, grafts, cuttings and buds that may be sold for propagation, whether cultivated or wild, and all viable parts of these plants."

A nursery hobbyist organization or individual is exempt from the requirement of obtaining a nursery stock dealer certificate if the plants were grown in Minnesota, intended for planting in Minnesota, and the gross sales of all nursery stock in a calendar year is not more than \$2,000. At the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) discretion, the MDA may prescribe the conditions of the nursery hobbyist sales and may conduct routine inspections of hobbyist nursery stock offered for sale.

Organizations such as the MNPS and garden clubs sometimes have members who live out-of-state, typically in neighboring states.

Members' plants that are grown outof-state cannot be sold at a Minnesota club's plant sale under the above exemption. This is because the objective of the legislation is to prevent plant diseases and pests from entering Minnesota. Such plants grown out-of-state must be certified by the Department of Agriculture in their state of origin before they can be sold in Minnesota. Minnesota has reciprocity with certification in all of the other United States. Uncertified nursery stock raised out-of-state cannot be sold at MNPS plant sales.

Certification requirements do not apply to annuals, bulbs, tubers, vegetable plants and ornamental indoor plants among others (see 18H.02 Subd. 20 for complete list). These categories of plants may be grown by Minnesota or out-of-state members and sold at a Minnesota organization's plant sale without need of any certification.

Under the Conservation of Certain Wildflowers (Minn. Statutes 18H.18), "No person shall distribute the state flower (Cypripedium reginae), or any species of lady slipper (Cypripedieae), any member of the orchid family, any gentian (Gentiana), arbutus (Epigaea repens), lilies (Lilium), coneflowers (Echinacea), bloodroot (Sanguinaria canadensis), mayapple (Podophyllum peltatum), any species of trillium, or lotus (Nelumbo lutea), which have been collected in any manner from any public or private property without the written permission of the property owner and written authorization from the commissioner."

Note that as of July 1, 2003, bloodroot and mayapple have been added to this act. An exception is made in the statute for wildflowers "growing naturally, collected and cultivated on the collector's property...."

Under MNPS policy, members may NOT collect plants from the wild for purposes of the MNPS sale, whether they are covered by this act or not. If a wildflower covered by this act has been grown on a member's private property, it can be sold at the MNPS sale, whether covered by this act or not, but the name of the private grower must be clearly indicated on the tag that goes with the plant, so that if any question arises as to a controlled plant's origin, the grower can be contacted for verification.

During the fall of 2004, MDA and trade organizations will begin discussions on amendments to the nursery laws. Anyone wanting to participate should contact Dianne Plunkett Latham at 952-941-3542 for notification of these meetings.

# County boards can veto designation of new SNAs

The Minnesota DNR must now obtain county board approval before designating a new Scientific and Natural Area. The amendment restricting DNR action was sponsored by Rep. David Dill, DFl, Crane Lake, and passed by the 2004 Legislature. The law now allows a county to block DNR management of land that already belongs to the state, such as within a state forest or park, or land purchased for but not yet designated as an SNA.

# Ferns have unusual life cycles

by Tom Bittinger, proprietor, Midwest Native Ferns, Owatonna. This is an abstract of his June 3, 2004 talk.

Ferns are interesting plants with a life cycle that is somewhat different from seed plants. The fern life cycle includes two separate, independent plants that are dissimilar in form and function.

One plant, the sporophyte, is the plant we are familiar with which is commonly seen in the wild and in our gardens. This plant produces dust-like spores, usually on the underside of the leaves (fronds).

When the spores germinate and grow, they actually produce a different type of plant altogether. This alternate generation plant is called a gametophyte, and it is usually only a few millimeters across, one to a few cells thick, and usually lives for a relatively short time. It is in these little structures that the sexual part of the life cycle takes place, with the production and fusion of gametes, and from which the new (sporophyte) plant grows.

Ferns (like many flowering plants) also exhibit many interesting methods of asexual (vegetative) reproduction.

There are about 12,000 species of ferns that have been described worldwide. Although most are found in the tropics, Minnesota is home to about 75 different species of ferns. A few examples of Minnesota's native ferns are:

**Bulblet fern** (*Cystopteris* bulbifera) — A fern with an interesting ability to propagate itself vegetatively. The underside of the long, narrow fronds produce small,

pea-like bulbs that fall off to germinate and quickly produce new plants. The pale green fronds can reach over three feet in length, but are rarely more than four inches in width at the base. Found on damp rocks, cliffs, ditches, and even in rocky woods, these ferns often form explosions of long, arching fronds. The bulblet prefers slightly basic soil, but is not particularly fussy when it comes to soil conditions.

Smooth cliff brake (Pellaea glabella) — A small rock-loving fern that is fairly common throughout much of southeast Minnesota. It often has a blue or blue-grey tint and is able to grow in dryer and more exposed environments than most ferns.

Walking fern (Asplenium rhizophillum) — One of the most interesting of Minnesota's ferns. The shiny leaves of the walking fern have a heart-shaped base and a long, slender tapering tip. Small plantlets will form at the tips of the leaves, taking root and giving this fern a unique "walking" method of asexual propagation. Scattered, oblong sori on the underside of the leaves facilitate reproduction through spores.

The walking fern is found in the southeastern corner of Minnesota in damp, shady places. It usually grows on mossy, limestone rocks, often covering them with large, tangled, mat-like colonies due to its efficient method of vegetative propagation.

Goldie's fern (*Dryopteris* goldiana) — The giant of our wood ferns, growing three to five feet tall. Long, scaly, upright stalks support gently arching fronds in a vase-like

arrangement. The broad fronds remain quite wide toward the tip, where they abruptly narrow to a point. The margins of the pinnae of young fronds are lighter green or, as they are sometimes described, "golden." (The species name, however, refers to a botanist, John Goldie, not to coloration.) This subtle shading can give this fern a two-toned appearance.

Goldie's fern is fairly rare in the wild in Minnesota. It is found in cool, moist woods and shady ravines.

Northern maidenhair (Adiantum pedatum) — One of Minnesota's most common ferns and also one of its most beautiful. This delicate woodland inhabitant has a unique form, which gives it a beautiful, lacy appearance.

The stipe is dark, a brownish purple to almost black, branching off into two arching rachises. The pinnae emerge from the inside of each of the two branches, giving the fronds a fan-like appearance.

The maidenhair spreads slowly, so controlling its spread is no trouble. It is beautiful as an individual specimen, or, as often found in rich, shady woods, a large colony. The fronds often orient themselves parallel to the ground, making large colonies appear as a green, lacy blanket floating inches above the forest floor.

Tom Bittinger sells spore-grown ferns and other shade plants grown from seed. For more information, contact him at 507-451-0190 or bittinger@ll.net, or write to Midwest Native Ferns, 7220 SW 37th Ave., Owatonna, MN 55060.

# **Grey Cloud Dunes SNA** continued from page 1

facilities to allow easy access and recreational use, development at SNAs is kept to a minimum so that there is very little disturbance and the area can more closely resemble its historic condition. These sites are real treasures and are crucial for researchers and students striving to learn about these systems.

The first scheduled activity at Grey Cloud Dunes will be pulling knapweed on July 17. For details please visit the SNA website at: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteering/sna/index.html, then click on the Newsletter. All future activities will be posted on the SNA website and will also be sent to the MNPS listserve (mn-natpl@stolaf.edu). For more information, contact Karen Schik at 651-222-2193 ext 15.

## Cedar Lake Park Walk is Aug. 28

Cedar Lake Park Association and the Minnesota Native Plant Society are sponsoring a Native Landscapes Walk in Cedar Lake Park Saturday, Aug. 28, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Keith Prussing, president of Cedar Lake Park Association, invites everyone to experience the nine-year-old prairie restoration. The evolving landscapes include oak woodland, maple basswood, emergent lakeshore and marsh. Prussing will be the guide on this easy walk. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at 21st St. W. and Upton Ave. S., Minneapolis. Participants must sign up in advance by contacting info@cedarlakepark.org or calling (612) 377-9522.

### 'How-to' for small prairies

Going Native: A Prairie Restoration Handbook for Minnesota Landowners is available from the Minnesota DNR. The book tells how to establish native prairie plants on plots of one to 20 acres. It is available at DNR offices and online at www.dnr.state.mn.us/prairierestoration/index.html

### **Plant Lore**

by Thor Kommedahl

### What is virgin's bower?

Virgin's bower is *Clematis* virginiana, a perennial vine in the buttercup family that is native to Minnesota. It is one of only two native species growing in Minnesota.

#### What do these names mean?

Clematis is the Greek name for climbing plants, and virginiana means from Virginia. Virgin's bower refers to the kind of shelter or covered place in a garden made with vines or branches twined together, presumably appropriate for a lady. Another name is old-man's-beard, for the long, feathery styles.

# Where does *Clematis virginiana* grow?

The more than 200 species of *Clematis* grow in northern parts of the world, and about 20 species are native to North America. In Minnesota, this species is seen along riverbanks, along the north shore of Lake Superior, and sometimes in hedges and thickets.

#### What do the plants look like?

This trailing vine can climb as much as 15 feet to cover other plants, creating a shaded shelter or bower. It supports itself by using its long petioles. The leaves are three-parted, sharply toothed or lobed, opposite, and about 2-3 inches long. The stems can be somewhat woody, even with bark. Both petals and sepals are white. The fruits (achenes) are attached to a feathery tail to account for the name old-man's-beard.

#### Has the plant any medicinal uses?

Clematis is not a drug of commerce; however, a liniment was once prepared and used for treatment for skin eruptions and itching. American Indians made an extract to treat cuts and sores. When it is applied fresh to skin, it can cause blistering and if taken internally is corrosive. Drying or boiling destroys poisonous properties. Further

# **Invasive Species Advisory Council**

by Esther McLaughlin

The April 20 meeting of the Minnesota Invasive Species Advisory Council (MISAC) dealt with many serious issues facing our state and its native fauna and flora.

MNPS is one of only a few non-commercial and non-governmental organizations on the council. It will be good for us and for MISAC to continue our involvement. Several other MNPS members besides me volunteer to attend meetings.

One report told of finding Sudden Oak Death (SOD) in nursery stock from a large wholesale company in California that shipped live material to 39 states before the disease was found. Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) will be tightening its requirements for inspection of material from California.

Of particular interest development of a geographic data base of invasive organism sightings and identifications for the entire state. A cooperative effort by MDA and the Minnesota DNR (the work of Luke Skinner, Peter Dziuk, and Jeff Siira, among others), it will eventually be web-based and searchable by species or county. If you come across a patch or an individual of an invasive in a place you never saw it before, you can email the information to Jeff Siira (jeff.siira@state.mn.us) at MDA. Later, they expect to have a webbased mechanism to add such records.

research is needed to determine its medicinal value.

# Does it have any other economic applications?

Because they hybridize easily and have showy blossoms, many horticultural varieties have been developed for growing in gardens, especially in partial shade.

## State Fair volunteers are needed

by Linda Huhn

Minnesota Native Plant Society members can receive a free pass to the Minnesota State Fair for any day they volunteer for a four-hour shift at the Minnesota State Horticultural Society's educational display on native plants. This is an opportunity for MNPS members to help fair visitors learn about native plants, and also to pass out MNPS brochures to visitors who request information.

In addition to using native plants as a theme for its fair display, the Horticultural Society has a feature article entitled "The Return of the Native/The wild prairies of yesteryear find new life in modern

landscapes," in the July/August issue of its magazine, Northern Gardener.

The educational display at the State Fair will be designed by Prairie Restorations, Inc., which is also donating the plant material. The display area will be located in the Southwest Wing, across the aisle from the Horticultural Society retail booth. All that is required of volunteers is to greet passers-by and offer to answer questions.

The fair is Aug. 26 through Sept. 6. Three shifts of volunteers are scheduled for the following times on each day: 8:45 a.m. – 1 p.m.; 12:45 p.m. – 5 p.m.; and 4:45 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Volunteers may take a 15- to 20-minute break during any four-hour shift. According to Vickie Winge, publisher of *Northern Gardener*, the priority dates to be filled are Aug. 29, Sept. 3, 4, 5, and 6, with most weekday traffic between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Please call Linda Huhn of MNPS at 612-374-1435 by July 21 to sign up for shifts. This is a great opportunity to educate the public about native plants (fulfilling our purpose) and about the Minnesota Native Plant Society, to have some fun helping the Horticultural Society, and to get free one-day admission to the fair.

# Minnesota Native Plant Society Member Registration

Name						
Addı	ress					
City				State	Zip	
Phone (work)			(home) _			
E-Ma	ail					
Membership category (New Renewal		)				
	Individual					
	Family (2 or more related persons at same address)					
\$8	Student (full time)					
\$8	Senior (62 or over or retired)					
\$20	Institution					
\$25	Donor					

Please fill in the form above and check the appropriate membership category. Your check should be made payable to the Minnesota Native Plant Society. Mail the completed form and your check to the Minnesota Native Plant Society, University of Minnesota, 250 Biological Sciences Center, 1445 Gortner Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

Minnesota Native Plant Society University of Minnesota 250 Biological Sciences Center 1445 Gortner Ave. St. Paul, MN 55108

### **Summer 2004 Issue**

